

WASHINGTON – Congressman Spencer Bachus (R-AL) made the following comments on Friday after the BRAC Commission voted to keep the Air National Guard 117th Air Refueling Wing unit in Birmingham:

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“This decision comes after tireless efforts by the 117th and the Alabama National Guard, the Governor and the entire Congressional delegation, who argued that the proposal to disband the 117

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was not only based on flawed logic, but illegal under BRAC statute. From the beginning, this proposal made no sense from a military or national security standpoint or from a dollars and cents standpoint.

The proposal violated congressional intent that required the decision to be made of military value.

Colonel Paul Brown and the 117

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, Governor Riley and the entire Alabama delegation got behind the effort to save the 117

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, and I am pleased these efforts paid off,” Congressman Bachus said.

“Colonel Paul Brown and Adjutant General Mark Bowen made overwhelmingly persuasive arguments that the Birmingham based 117th was presently performing its refueling mission far more efficiently than under the Pentagon’s proposal,” Bachus continued.

“Being presented with this evidence, the Commission had no choice but to vote as it did.

My thanks to all those who helped us in this fight and my congratulations to Colonel Paul Brown and all members of the 117th

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The decision is also good news for the Alabama tax payers since the 117th

provides 15 full-time firefighters for the Birmingham Municipal Airport and replacing the firefighting capacity would have incurred an additional quarter of a million dollars in annual cost,” Bachus said.

“Colonel George McCurdy at the Alabama Air National Guard headquarters summarized the decision well, ‘It ensures the 117th continues to be one of the premier air refueling units in the military

with MILITARY VALUE SECOND TO NONE,” Bachus concluded.

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